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THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: Daniel L. Auclair, Jeffrey Craig, John S. Mangan, Robert D. Norman, Daniel C. Guterman and Sanjay Mehrotra

Assignee: SanDisk Corporation

Title: Soft Errors Handling in EEPROM Devices

Application No.: 09/437,078 Filing Date: November 9, 1999

Examiner: Moise, Emmanuel Lionel Group Art Unit: 2133

Docket No.: M-10202-5C US Conf. No.: 7501

San Francisco, California
January 30, 2003

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D. C. 20231

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RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION FEB 06 2003

Technology Center 2100

Dear Sir:

These remarks are in response to the Official Action mailed on October 30, 2002. The Office Action rejected claims 37 and 39-50 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, on the basis of a lack of support for independent claims 37, 39, 42 and 46. This is respectfully submitted to be in error for the reasons given below.

Claim 46

The Office Action states that it fails to find support for the second element of claim 46, "identifying a second sector of said memory cells having one or more memory cells with a charge above the first reference level and below the second reference level". It is respectfully submitted that this element is fully supported by the specification.

In particular, beginning on page 24, line 29, the present application states "generally a different [second] sector ... [is] tested", followed by a description of the flow chart of Figure 9. As described in the following lines and as shown in Figure 9, the second sector is first read

LAW OFFICES OF
SKJERVEN MORRILL LLP
3 EMBARCADERO CENTER
28TH FLOOR
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94111
(415) 217-6000
FAX (415) 434-0646

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